

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4818

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DEPT FOR EA/ANP

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID XP

SUBJ: SPEC AID REVIEW SEMINAR - SUVA MARCH 2-4, 1976

1. SOUTH PACIFIC BUREAU FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION (SPEC), ACTING ON BEHALF OF SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM COUNTRIES, HOSTED THREE DAY AID REVIEW SEMINAR IN SUVA MARCH 2-4. PARTICIPANTS INCLUDED AID RECIPIENT COUNTRIES (COOKS, FIJI, NAURU, NIUE, PAPUA NEW GUINEA, SOLOMONS, NOT REPRESENTED WERE WESTERN SAMOA AND TONGA), DONOR COUNTRIES (AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, CANADA, U.K.--OBSERVER, U.S.--OBSERVER), AND REGIONAL AND MULTILATERAL ORGANIZATIONS (ADB, COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT, ILO, ITU, NZ OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE, NZ VOLUNTEER SERVICE ABROAD, SPC, UNDAT, UNDP/FAO, USP AND WHO). U.S. WAS REPRESENTED BY EMBASSY OFFICER AND PEACE CORPS COUNTRY DIRECTOR. PURPOSE OF THE MEETING WAS TO GIVE SEVEN MAN TASK FORCE, HEADED BY TONGA S CATHOLIC BISHOP FINAU, AN OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN FROM FOREIGN ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS AND DONORS WHAT PROBLEMS CURRENTLY EXIST IN THE AID PROCESS, AND TO COME UP WITH RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MORE EFFECTIVE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS IN THE PACIFIC. DISCUSSIONS WERE MAINLY OFF THE RECORD, NOT FOR ATTRIBUTION, AND THE TASK FORCE WILL USE THE COMMENTS, IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS IN THEIR FORMAL REPORT TO THE FORUM

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IN APPROXIMATELY SIX MONTHS.

2. AS EXPECTED PRINCIPAL ATTENTION WAS GIVEN TO PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY PRIMARY AID DONORS TO REGION, AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND, AND TO UN PROGRAMS. MAJORITY OF DISCUSSIONS CONCERNED BILATERAL AID PROGRAMS AND LOCAL COSTS FOR VOLUNTARY AGENCIES, WHICH EFFECTIVELY TURNED ATTENTION AWAY FROM U.S. MODE OF ASSISTANCE TO THE REGION, PRIMARILY REGIONAL AND MULTILATERAL. MOST OF THE PACIFIC ISLAND COUNTRIES WERE NOT WELL REPRESENTED, WHICH CAME AS SURPRISE TO U.S. OBSERVER SINCE THIS WAS ORGANIZED ON BEHALF OF FORUM. ON THE WHOLE, THE DISCUSSIONS WERE FRANK BUT FRIENDLY AND BOTH DONORS AND RECIPIENTS WERE TRYING HARD TO MAKE POSITIVE, CONSTRUCTIVE STATEMENTS. TASK FORCE SEEMED PLEASED WITH THE INFORMATION DERIVED FROM DISCUSSIONS, ALTHOUGH NOTHING PARTICULARLY EARTH-SHAKING IS LIKELY TO APPEAR IN THEIR REPORT.

3. WHEN AVAILABLE SEMINAR DOCUMENTS WILL BE POUCHED TO DEPARTMENT UNDER COVER OF AIRGRAM.
HALL

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